

IMPORTANT TRIFLES,

1158. c. 10.

Chiefly designed for the Entertainment and Instruction of Youth; which, in a pleasing Variety, and by an Assemblage of interesting Histories, Tales, &c. of admired Authors, are calculated to attract their Attention, either towards contemplating the Beauties and Deformities of peculiar Virtues and Vices, or, towards such Subjects and Events, which at particular Periods of Time may become Topica for Conversation.

C R O E S U S, K I N G O F L Y D I A.



With additional Pieces applicable thereto.

EMBELLISHED WITH CUTS.

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SUBJECT

On the Vi-
cissitudes of
FORTUNE.

CONTENTS.

Crotus,
King of
Lydia, an
Historical
Example
* * *

Select Sen-
tences, the
Sentiments
of ancient
and modern
Authors.
* * *

The Temple
of Nature
and of For-
tune.

A Dream
* * *

Various
Historical
Examples
of the Vicis-
situdes of
Fortune; viz.

Of Atilius
Regulus,
Mithridates,
Lyfmachus,
Perseus,
Cornelius
Aquila.
* * *

With mar-
ginal Illu-
strations, Re-
ferences, &
Observa-
tions, &c.

GENERAL DESIGN.

THE design in the publication of these TRIFLES, is in one point of view, to attract the attention of youth toward that subject or event, which at any particular period of time may become a topic for conversation, and, towards contemplating the beauties and deformities of peculiar virtues and vices, which occasionally may, in any laudible or reproachful mode introduce themselves into the general theatre of human actions; to furnish extracts from various authors, that may tend to assist the inquisitive mind if inclined to join in an investigation, or enquiry, into such subject or event; or, towards contemplating any peculiar virtuous or vicious action which may excite observation or discussion; and, to hold up as it were in a mirror, the objects mentioned, whether deserving of esteem, of pity, of detestation, or of resentment.

VARIETY is another principle point in view, in the publication of these TRIFLES, for the accomplishment of which purpose the different subjects contained therein, will consist of selections, either from history, poetry, short sentences, the sentiments of antient philosophers, and of modern authors, fables, tales, novels, allegories, visions, essays, remarks, observations, anecdotes, songs, epigrams, bon-mots, &c. &c. which may be applicable to the subject treated on.

The third point in view in the publication of these TRIFLES is, that under the pleasing assemblage of entertaining histories or descriptions, one or more of which will be introduced in each publication, a more general collection of elegant and useful literature, and by the most esteemed authors, will be opened to those, particularly youth, who, from the expence which attends the purchasing of different volumes, have been kept back from the enjoyment of; and from a knowledge of the excellencies and beauties of English literature, and who, instead thereof, have been happy in the accumulation of literary trash.

Finally, several of these TRIFLES being bound together, of which twelve different subjects will make a moderate size volume, will thus form as an agreeable, miscellaneous, and even useful body of literature, as is to be met with in any of the compilations hitherto published.

OBSERVATIONS and REMARKS, on the manner in which these TRIFLES, are intended to be printed and published.

THESE TRIFLES as before observed in the general design, will consist of a miscellaneous selection of literature, and, are intended in the course of their publication to be adapted to one temporary subject, circumstance, or event, which will be observed in each TRIFLE; but, which nevertheless may, at the option of the reader be adapted to a more general nature, and for which latter purpose, not only a general head line title will be given throughout, but also a head line title to each distinct piece, both of which will be pagged separately.

In order therefore to adapt them to the general nature proposed, in the first instance, the uppermost paging may either be cut off or remain on,

on, and the several subjects be arranged alphabetically, agreeable to which they may be distinguished on the uppermost, or general head line, and to which titles will be adapted.

In the second instance, the various pieces may be separately arranged at the entire pleasure of the reader, for which purpose, each piece will be so printed as to be capable of being separated, and when so separated and intended to be bound or sewed together, to be cut close underneath the general head line on each page, with which every part throughout will correspond; and any reader by ingeniously paging them in the centre after they may be so cut, in progressive order, and on a line with the page on each separate piece, may unquestionably claim the merit of being the editor of such selection, and further to encourage such literary emulation, title-pages to correspond with collections formed therefrom, whether of Miscellanies, Poems, Songs, Histories, Tales, Allegories, Dreams, Visions, &c. will be adapted to the diminished size, with a blank space for the name of any one who may wish to claim the literary approbation of their friends and acquaintance for their arrangement and choice of subjects.

Notwithstanding the small size to which the different pieces will be reduced after their being cut, any two volumes, or more, composed herefrom, will contain as much as any two or greater number of volumes, which form prior collections, they, too generally abounding in subjects, which may be found in both, and some of which may be found in every collection that is to be met with; on which latter account any number of volumes formed from these TRIFLES, whether under their general title, or under such which may be adapted in the additional ones intended to be given, will be infinitely cheaper than an equal number of volumes which may consist of an equal number of pages of any general collection.

OF SUBJECT I.

OF THE IMPORTANT TRIFLES.

THE First subject made choice of for the IMPORTANT TRIFLES, is on the VICISSITUDES of FORTUNE founded on the present humiliated situation of that family, who, but a very short space of time past, were the most elevated persons of a great and powerful kingdom.

Louis the XVI. ascended the throne of his ancestors with all its original magnificence and splendour, and was for a time revered, and even idolized by his subjects. This love and reverence to kings have been for ages peculiar in France.

In his early years he was betrothed in marriage to ANTOINETTE of the House of Austria, a custom among foreign sovereign princes.

The alliance being completed, ANTOINETTE soon became remarkable for the magnificence of her dress, the loftiness of her deportment, and of her behaviour towards inferiors, insomuch so, that she gave general disgust. It is not by this remark intended to insult the unfortunate

unfortunate in distress, but to convey a moral of the endearments attached to humility and condescension.

When BRITAIN were engaged in a contest with AMERICA, LOUIS contributed towards the liberty acquired by the latter; but not so much merely to assist their liberty as to lessen the importance of the former. That liberty being established, it speedily sowed the seeds thereof in the breast of every FRENCHMAN; and a similar jewel which was acquired by AMERICA, became a contest for between LOUIS and his subjects.

LOUIS at length finding on his part open resistance vain, acceded to the inclinations of his people, and a new constitution for the kingdom being formed, he swore at the altar of Liberty, which his subjects had erected, to maintain the new constitution which was consecrated thereto.

The subsequent conduct of LOUIS, soon caused his subjects to doubt his sincerity; facts have transpired to encrease those doubts, and they in return first precipitated him from that eminence of station he before held, to that of a wretched prisoner; and instead of those reverential titles which were formerly bestowed upon him, of sovereign, and father of his people, they changed to the odious epithets of his being treacherous and perfidious, and at last brought him to the scaffold.

Examples of the Vicissitudes of Fortune, are not confined to particularly eminent persons, neither are they confined to particular periods; all are equally liable thereto: they have happened both in early and latter periods, and will in all probability happen again; what may happen cannot be foreseen, what have happened, the following pages, in a variety of instances will exhibit.

* * The proper names of persons and places, and such particular circumstances and events, &c. which will be made choice of for elucidation and additional information, in the course of the work, will be distinguished by Italics in the body of the different pages, to which the marginal references will in a similar manner correspond, instead of making use of alterisims, &c. &c.

On FORTUNE.] IMPORTANT TRIFLES.

HISTORICAL EXAMPLE,
OF THE
VICISSITUDE OF FORTUNE.



C R Œ S U S,
K I N G O F L Y D I A.

CROESUS was one of the Kings of Lydia, and his very name which became a proverb, carries in it an idea of immense riches. The wealth of this prince, to judge it only by the presents he made to the temple of *Delphos*, must have been excessively great. Most of these presents were to be seen in the time of Herodotus; and were worth several millions. We may partly account for the treasures of this prince from certain mines that he had situated, according to Strabo, between *Pergamos* and *Atarnes*; as also from the little river *Pactolus*

(1)
From wh.
selected, &c.

Beauties of
History, &c.
Recorded
by *Herodotus*
Plutarch,
and *Rollin*,
* * *

For an elucidation of the annexed print, see the marginal reference in page 7 of this Example.

Craesus :
He was the last king of Lydia. He lived about 600 years bef. Christ.

Delphos :
Was a temple situated on mount *Parnassus*, dedicated to *Apollo*, as the deity of divination, or prophesying.

IMPORTANT TRIFLES. [On the Subject

(2)

From wh:
selected, &cAs in p. 1,
of this Exa.
* * *

Herodotus:
He was a
famous
historian.
He lived
about 500
yrs. before
Christ.

Solon:
He was one
of the
seven wise
men of
Greece.
They flour-
ished 620
yrs. before
Christ.

HISTOR. EXAMP. of the VICIS. of FORTUNE.

Pactolus the sand of which was gold. This uncommon affluence, which is a thing extraordinary, did not enervate or soften the courage of Croesus. He thought it unworthy of a prince to spend his time in idleness and pleasures. *Herodotus* observes that he was the first conqueror of the Greeks, who till then had never been subject to a foreign power. But what is still more extraordinary in this prince, though he was immensely rich, and so great a warrior, yet his chief delight was in literature and the sciences. His court was the ordinary residence of those famous and learned men, so revered by antiquity, and distinguished by the name of the seven wise men of Greece. *Solon*, one of the most celebrated amongst them, after having established new laws at Athens, went to Sardis, where he was received in a manner suitable to the reputation of so great a man. The king attended with a numerous court, appeared in all his royal pomp and splendor, dressed in the most magnificent apparel, which was all over enriched with gold, and glittered with diamonds. Notwithstanding the novelty of this spectacle to *Solon*, it did not appear that he was the least moved at it, or that he uttered a word which discovered the least surprize or admiration; on the contrary, people of sense might sufficiently discern from his behaviour, that he looked upon all this outward pomp, as an indication of a little mind, which knows not in what true greatness

OF FORTUNE.] IMPORTANT TRIFLES.

HISTOR. EXAMP. of the VICIS. of FORTUNE.

This greatness consists. This coldness and indifference in Solon's first approach gave the king no favourable opinion of his new guest. He afterwards ordered that all his treasures, his magnificent apartments, and costly furniture should be shewn him; as if he expected by the multitude of his fine vessels, diamonds, statues, and paintings, to conquer the philosopher's indifference. But it was the king that Solon was come to visit, and not the walls or chambers of his palace. He had no notion of making an estimate of his worth, by these outward appendages, but by himself and personal qualities.

When Solon had seen all, he was brought back to the king: Croesus then asked him, which of mankind, in all his travels, he had found the most truly happy! "One Tullus," replied Solon, "a citizen of *Athens*, a very honest and good man, who had lived all his days without indigence, had always seen his country in a flourishing condition, had children that were universally esteemed, with the satisfaction of seeing those children's children, and at last died gloriously fighting for his country." Such an answer as this, in which gold and silver were accounted as nothing, seemed to Croesus to argue a strange ignorance and stupidity. However, as he flattered himself with being ranked in the second degree of happiness, he asked him, who of all those he had seen was the next in felicity to Tullus?

Solon

(3)

From wh.
selected &cAs in p. 1,
of this Exa.
* * *

Athens:
Was once
the most
famous city
of Greece,
it was
founded by
Cecrops
about 1600
yrs. before
Christ.

IMPORTANT TRIFLES. [On the Subject

(4)

From wh.
selected, &c

HISTOR. EXAMP. of the VICIS. of FORTUNE

As in p. 1,
of this Exa.

* * *

*Cleobis and
Biton :*They were
the sons of
Argia, a
priestess of
Juno.*Juno :*
According
to the Hea-
then my-
thology
was wife to
Jupiter, and
great queen
of Heaven.
She was al-
so the deity
who pre-
sided over
marriages
and births.*Argos :*
Was a fa-
mous coun-
try in
Greece.

Solon answered, "*Cleobis and Biton*, two brothers, of Argos, left behind them a perfect pattern of fraternal affection, and respect due from children to their parents. Upon a solemn festival, when their mother, a priestess of *Juno*, was to go to the temple, the oxen that were to draw her not being ready, the two sons put themselves to the yoke, and drew their mother's chariot thither, which was above five miles distant. All the mothers of the place, ravished with admiration, congratulated the priestess on the piety of her sons. She, in the transport of her joy and thankfulness, earnestly intreated the goddess to reward her children with the greatest gift that heaven could give to man. Her prayers were heard. When the sacrifice was over, her two sons fell asleep in the very temple, and there died in a soft and peaceful slumber. In honour of their piety, the people of Argos consecrated statues to them in the temple of Delphos."

"What! then," says Cræsus, "you do not reckon me in the number of the happy?" Solon, who was not willing either to flatter or exasperate him, replied calmly; "King of Lydia, besides many other advantages, the gods have given us Grecians a spirit of moderation and reserve, which hath produced amongst us a plain popular kind of philosophy, accompanied with a certain generous freedom, void of pride or ostentation; and therefore not well suited to the courts of kings."

[OF FORTUNE.] IMPORTANT TRIFLES.

HISTOR. EXAMP. of the VICIS. of FORTUNE.

()
From wh,
selected &cAs in p. i,
of this Exa.
* * *

kings. This philosophy, considering what an infinite number of vicissitudes and accidents the life of man is liable to, does not allow us either to glory in any prosperity we enjoy ourselves, or to admire happiness in others, which perhaps may prove only transient or superficial." From hence he took occasion to observe to him further. "That the life of man seldom exceeds seventy years, which are made up of months, weeks, and days, not two of which are exactly alike: so that the time to come is nothing but a series of various accidents which cannot be foreseen. *Therefore, in our opinion (continued he) no man can be esteemed happy, but he whose happiness God continues to the end of his life.* As for others, who are perpetually exposed to a thousand dangers, we account their happiness as uncertain as the crown to a person that is engaged in battle, and has not yet obtained the victory."

It was not long before Cræsus experienced the truth of what Solon had told him. He had two sons, one of whom being dumb, was perpetual affliction to him. The other named *Atys*, was distinguished by every good quality. And was his great consolation and delight. One day there was to be an extraordinary hunting-match for the killing of a wild boar, which had committed great ravage in the neighbourhood. All the young lords of the court were to be at this hunting. *Atys* very earnestly importuned his father that he would

He is said
by some
historians
to have
been the
dumb son.
By others
that he was
blind.

IMPORTANT TRIFLES. [On the Subject

(6)

From wh.
selected, &c

As in p. 1,
of this Exa.

* * *

Adrastus:
Was the
son of the
king of the
Argives.

Cyrus:
He united
the king-
doms of the
Medes and
Persians.
He died
529 years
b.c. Christ.

HISTOR. EXAMP. of the VICIS. of FORTUNE.

would give him leave to be present. The king granted his request; but put him under the care of a discreet young prince, who had taken refuge in his court, and was named *Adrastus*; and this very *Adrastus*, as he was aiming his javelin at the boar, unfortunately killed *Atys*. It was impossible to express either the affliction of the father when he heard of this fatal accident, or of the unhappy prince, the innocent author of the murder, who expiated his fault with his blood, stabbing himself in the breast with his own sword, upon the funeral pile of the unfortunate *Atys*. Two whole years were spent on this occasion in deep mourning, the afflicted father's thoughts being wholly taken up with the loss he had sustained. But the growing reputation and great qualities of *Cyrus*, king of Persia, who then began to make himself known, roused his martial spirits, and diverted his mind to other thoughts. A war commenced between the two kings, in the course of which *Cyrus* laid siege to *Sardis*, and carried it, and likewise took *Cræsus* captive. *Cræsus*, being a prisoner was condemned by the conqueror to be burnt alive, with fourteen young *Lydians*, as a sacrifice and first fruits of his victory. Accordingly the funeral pile was prepared, and that unhappy prince being laid thereon, and just upon the point of execution, recollecting the conversation he formerly had with *Solon*, was woefully convinced of the truth

OF FORTUNE.] IMPORTANT TRIFLES.

HISTOR. EXAMP. of the VICIS. of FORTUNE.

(7)
From wh.
selected, &cAs in p. 1,
of this Exa.
* * *

truth of that philosopher's admonition; and in remembrance thereof, cried out aloud three times, "O Solon, Solon, Solon!" Cyrus who, with the chief officers of his court, was present at this spectacle, was curious to know why Croesus pronounced that philosopher's name with so much vehemence in his extremity. Being told the reason, and reflecting upon the uncertain state of all sublunary things, he was touched with commiseration of the prince's misfortunes, caused him to be taken from the pile, and treated him afterwards as long as he lived, with honour and respect. Thus had Solon the glory with a single sentence to save the life of one king, and give a wholesome lesson of instruction to another. Croesus, if we may judge of him by the character he bears in history, was a very good prince, and worthy of esteem in many respects. He had a great deal of good nature, affability, and humanity. His palace was a receptacle for men of wit and learning, and he himself had a taste for the sciences. His weakness was, that he laid a great stress upon riches and magnificence, thought himself great and happy in proportion to his possessions, mistook regal pomp and splendor for true and solid greatness, and fed his vanity with the excessive submission of those that stood in a kind of adoration before him. These learned men, those wits, and other courtiers who enriched themselves by his bounty and liberality

From the
annexed
passage the
print in p.
1, of this
Example is
taken.

IMPORTANT TRIFLES. [On the Subject

(8)

From wh.
selected. &c.

HISTOR. EXAMP. of the VICIS. of FORTUNE.

As in p. I.
of this Exa.

* * *

Aesop:
He flour-
ished a-
bout 600
yrs. before
Christ.*Seneca:*
He was tu-
tor to Nero,
the Roman
Emperor;
by whose
order he
was bled to
death in
the 63d yr.
of his age,
and 64 yrs.
bef. Christ.

lity, took care not to differ from the prince's taste, and never thought of undeceiving him with respect to his errors and false ideas. *Aesop*, the author of the fables, who had formerly been a slave, and still retained somewhat of the spirit and character of slavery, then at the court of this prince, observing that Solon was looked upon with coldness after his conversation with the king, said to him by way of advice, "Solon, we must either not come near princes at all, or speak such things as may be for their good."

Seneca is perfectly of Solon's opinion. Speaking of what great use a faithful and sincere friend may be to a prince, is thus translated, from his own words. "Tell them not what they choose to hear, but what they will wish they had heard. Give them wholesome advice; let a word of truth reach those ears which are perpetually fed and entertained with flattery. You will ask me what service can be done to a person arrived at the highest pitch of felicity? It will teach him not to trust in his prosperity; it will remove that vain confidence he has in his power and greatness, as if they were to endure for ever; make him understand that every thing which belongs to, and depends upon fortune, is as unstable as herself; and that there is often but the space of a moment between the highest elevation, and the most unhappy downfall."

OF FORTUNE.] IMPORTANT TRIFLES.

SELECT SENTENCES.

From wh.
selected, &cWit's Com
Wealth.
• • •

Fortune is a feigned device of the imagination, and a meer phantom without a truth.

The gifts of Fortune are transitory, and unconfined, but the gifts of nature are permanent, and endure always.

Fortune is like *Janus*, double faced, as full of smiles to comfort, as of frowns to discourage.

By the excessive gain of wealthy men, Fortune was first made a Goddess.

Fortune is so exceeding slippery, that she cannot be held by any one, against her own will.

Fortune is so variable, that she is ever turning her wheel, without ceasing.

Fortune is as brittle as glass, and when she shineth, is then often broken in pieces.

Fortune is constant in nothing, but in inconstancy.

Fortune is not fully pacified even after she hath been revenged.

The changes of fortune, and the end of life, are always uncertain.

Fortune delighteth not so much to keep under the vanquished, as to bridle and check the victors.

Fortune is to great men deceitful, to good men unstable, and to all who are high, unsure.

Thou shalt sooner find good fortune than keep it.

Fortune is inconstant, and too often quickly requires again what she hath before bestowed.

Fortune is a rebellious hand against virtue.

Janus :
He is said
to have
known
things past
and to
come.

Author
SOCRATES

M. AURE-
LIUS.

PACUVIUS

TRABELLI

IMPORTANT TRIFLES. [On the Subject

From wh^o
selected, &c

SELECT SENTENCES.

Wit's Com.
Wealth.

Author
SOCRATES

Every man is the workman of his own fortune, and fashioneth her according to his manners.

In great perils, it is better that men submit themselves unto reason, than recommend themselves to fortune.

When fortune cometh suddenly, bringing with her some present delight and pleasure, it is a token, that by her flattery she hath made ready her snares to catch us.

Through idleness, negligence, and too much trust in fortune, not only men, but kingdoms and cities, have been utterly destroyed.

That is not thine own which fortune hath given thee.

It is of little advantage to the unfortunate to be generous and bold, for one hour of good fortune is of more value than all the policy used in war.

Fortune flies, and if she touch poverty, it is with her heel, disdaineth her want with a frown, rather than envying wealth with disparagement.

Fortune is in no circumstance more uncertain than in war.

There can be no greater check to the pride of fortune, than with resolution to pass by her vexations without care.

Fortune ever favours them who are most valiant; and undertakings the more difficult, the more noble.

M. AN-
TISTUS.

SOCRATES

OLAUS.

CICERO.

OF FORTUNE.] IMPORTANT TRIFLES,

SELECT SENTENCES.

Thou provokest Fortune to anger; to say thou art happy.

Fortune is never more deceitful, then to those whom she seemeth most to favour.

A valiant man never loses his reputation though fortune faileth him, for his courage only dyeth with him.

Fortune hath no power over discretions.

Fortune shews herself noble, in a mind generous and noble.

Exterior actions are tied to the wings of fortune.

Fortune sheweth her greatness, when such as are from little value, advanced to possessions of great worth.

No man is so perfectly settled in any degree of fortune, but whom is subject to chance and alteration.

To a man whom fortune doth not favour diligence little avails.

To him whom is fortunate, every land is his own country.

To be humble in the height of fortune, says the deceit of her wheel in turning.

A fortunate man shall have more cousins and kinsfolks, than ever he had friends, either by his father or mothers side.

Fortune often delights to dignify what nature has neglected, and that renown, which cannot be claimed by intrinsic excellence, or greatness, is sometimes derived from unexpected accidents.

From wh.
selected, &c

Wit's Com.
Wealth.

Author
PLOTINUS

SOLON.

PLATO.

M. AURE-
LIUS.

THALES.

Beauties of
Dr. JOHNSON.

IMPORTANT TRIFLES. [On the Subject

From wh.
selected, &c

Beaut. of
Dr. John-
son.

• • •

The speak-
er.

Joe Mil-
ler's Jests.

Beauties of
History.

SELECT SENTENCES.

Examples need not to be sought at any great distance, to prove that *superiority of fortune* has a natural tendency to kindle pride.

When fortune strikes her hardest blows, to be wounded and yet continue calm, requires a generous policy.

No man was ever cast down with the injuries of fortune, unless he had before suffered himself to be deceived by her favours.

The satisfaction we take in a friend's good fortune, is not from a principle of good nature but interest; we expect to rise in our turns, or to be the better for them that are risen.

We may reasonably compare the gifts of Fortune to an eel, which we no sooner have in our hands, but she slips through our fingers.

Nothing makes us so easy in the unequal distribution of the goods of fortune, as the opinion we have of our own desert.

In various historical examples, are notable instances of the uncertainty of human grandeur, and of the mutability of Fortune; let it make a proper impression on all, but especially on such as are in the vigour of age. Let not present prosperity so far puff up any one, as to make him behave with arrogance towards another; neither let any one confide in his good fortune, for he cannot tell how soon it may forsake him.

OF FORTUNE.] IMPORTANT TRIFLES.

THE
TEMPLE OF NATURE
AND
FORTUNE,
A DREAM.

(1)

From wh.
selected &cBrit. Mora-
list.Allegories
for Ladies,
&c. &c.The origi-
nal in the
Museum.

* * *



For an elu-
cidation of
the annex-
ed print,
see the mar-
ginal refer-
ence in p. 2,
of this
Dream.

HAVING a few nights ago spent the even-
ing in some company, where our dis-
course turned on the uncertain distribution of
the gifts of Fortune, observable among man-
kind: when I came home and went to bed, I
fell presently asleep; when methought I found
myself at the porch of what I imagined to be
a large temple; my curiosity led me into it,
and I was soon convinced it was really two
different temples, the one beyond the other,
and only separated by a large and long pas-
sage. At the upper end of the first temple;

on

IMPORTANT TRIFLES. [On the Subject

(2)
From wh.
selected, &c

As in p. 1,
of this Dr.
* * *

The TEMPLE of NATURE and FORTUNE.

on a low throne was seated a woman almost naked, but very graceful, of a mild and humane aspect, and whom, had she not had her name written on her breast, I should immediately known to be Nature. To her a vast croud of people, wherewith the place was filled, and who were pushing forward to get into the second temple, first of all made their application, on whom she seemed to dispense her favours pretty equally, giving to every one some particular talent, but at the same time joining some singular vice or folly thereto, by which means the generality of people were rendered nearly on an equality by her.

I went through this passage along with the rest of the company, and was brought by it into the second temple, which was that of Fortune; at the further end of which, at a very great height above the ground, the goddess was seated, blindfold, and having near her a machine resembling a lottery wheel, which she was continually turning round, and out of which she drew preferments, riches, and honours; which she gave away promiscuously, as the croud could come to receive them. The apparent way to her seat was very broad, but the ascent steep and slippery, which was called Merit. Many people laboured to get up this way, but often slipped and were disappointed, but what I was much surprised at, was to see several at the top, and receiving the gifts which Fortune drew from her wheel, whom I had not observed

From the
annexed
passage the
print in p.
1, of this
Dream is
taken.

OF FORTUNE.] IMPORTANT TRIFLES.

A D R E A M.

observed to pass up this hill; this mystery however was explained, when, on casting my eyes downward, I perceived two little wickets at the bottom of the slope, over which was inscribed Good Luck, and Interest. Through these many people passed, and were carried up by private stairs, that went winding underneath the hill. The last was much more crowded than the first, through which those that did pass, seemed to hurry along without knowing whither they were going; and appeared surprized when they found themselves the favourite of *Fortune*, contrary to all probability, and by the same means that proved the ruin of others. But it was pleasing enough, after remarking the several courses taken by different people, to observe the impropriety of the benefits bestowed on them; for although many produced the gifts they had been endowed with by Nature as a recommendation to entitle them to those of *Fortune*, very little regard seemed to be had to them. Those favours, which were gained by the way of Good-Luck, were some properly and others improperly disposed of. Those come at through the wicket of Interest, were most of them ridiculously bestowed. By passing through this way, cowards became admirals or generals of armies; the nephew of a noble lord, who had idly run out his estate, was placed at the head of an office, where he became intrusted with the management of the public money; the brother

(3)
From wh.
selected, &c.

As in p. 1,
of this Dr.

Fortune:
According to the Heathen mythology was denominated a goddess. She is therein said to be the daughter of Oceanus the great god of the sea. She is represented with a wheel, as emblematical of her instability, &c.

IMPORTANT TRIFLES. [On the Subject

(4)
From wh.
selected, &c.

The TEMPLE of NATURE and FORTUNE.

As in p. 1,
of these Ex.

ther of another who had spent part of his life in all kinds of vice and debauchery, entered into holy orders, had a rich benefice bestowed upon him, and set himself up for a reformer of manners. In short, I observed, that whoever could get through this lucky passage, might be judge, bishop, secretary of state, ambassador, or almost what he pleased, without any other qualification. It was however observable, that when some had received any considerable gifts of Fortune, by what means soever they were obtained, a croud of others were constantly following sometimes fawning on them, and at other times jostling them, with an intent to rob them of what they had got, which, if all other means failed, they would commonly effect by placing stumbling blocks in their way, which could not be avoided without the utmost care and prudence; inasmuch that prime-ministers, generals of armies, and favourites of princes, had their heels tripped up, and were tumbled down the steep ascents by these people, not without great danger of their necks. But the most provoking sight was to behold some, who, after much pains, being arrived very near the summit by the road of Merit, and just on the point of receiving the reward due to their virtue and assiduity, were at last disappointed, by having it snatched from them by some worthless upstarts, who had got thither before them by one of the more easy but less honourable ways. I therefore determined to endeavour at the wicket of Good-Luck, where I happily succeeded, and being got to the top, had, methought, a very considerable preferment conferred on me by the blind goddess; but turning suddenly back, one of those who were coming up through the passage of Interest, bustling to get at the next favour which Fortune presented, in his haste gave me so violent a push as tumbled me down stairs, the force of which fall awakened me. When baffled of all my high-flown hopes, I found myself still lying on my own stuff-damask'd bed, in a two pair of stairs room. Sic Transit Gloria Mundi.

OF FORTUNE.] IMPORTANT TRIFLES.

HISTORICAL EXAMPLES,
OF THE
VICISSITUDES OF FORTUNE.

(1)
From wh.
selected, &c.

Beauties of
History.

Recorded
by *Liuy.*
Rome:
Was found
ed 753 yrs.
bef. Christ.
Consuls:
Were first
appointed
507, and
abolished
476 years
bef. Christ.

OF ATILIUS REGULUS.

IN the year of *Rome* 496, Atilius Regulus was chosen consul a second time. Like the great Cincinnatus, he was actually sowing his land when the deputies informed him of his election to the consular purple. In those happy times, poverty was not despise, nor was it any impediment to the exercise of the most exalted posts in the commonwealth: for it was frequently seen, that the same hand which held the plough, sustained the state, and cut to pieces the armies of its enemies. It was for this purpose that Regulus was now fixed on; and, there-

IMPORTANT TRIFLES. [On the Subject

(2)

From wh.
selected, &cAs in p. 1.
of these Ex.Carthagini-
ans:They were
a people
inhabiting
part of
Africa,
whose ca-
pital was
the famous
city of Car-
thage,
founded by
the Tyrians
1259 years
Christ.

HISTOR. EXAMP. of the VICIS. of FORTUNE.

therefore, he no sooner received the necessary instructions of the senate, than he set out to attack the *Carthaginians* in their own country. So rapid and amazing was the success which attended his arms, that in less than twelve months, more than two hundred places surrendered to him. He likewise made himself master of Tunis, which lay within fifteen miles of the capital, a place of the utmost importance. The enemy were extremely alarmed, every thing had gone against them hitherto; they had been defeated as well by sea as land. The Numidians also committed as great ravages in their country as the Romans: in short, they expected every moment to see their capital besieged. The peasants, flying thither from all parts with their wives and children for refuge, augmented the confusion and trouble, and made them apprehend a famine in case of a siege. In this deplorable situation, without resource, and without hope, they deputed the principal persons of their senate to ask peace of the Roman general. Regulus did not refuse to treat with their ambassadors, but insisted upon such concessions from the *Carthaginians* as were indeed hard and rigorous: and as he knew they were reduced to extremities, he would abate nothing of the conditions offered, whatever instances the deputies made to him on that head. He even treated them with haughtiness, telling them "that they ought to consider all he left them as a great favour;" adding,

OF FORTUNE.] IMPORTANT TRIFLES.

HISTOR. EXAMP. of the VICIS. of FORTUNE.

(3)

From wh.
selected, &c.As in p. 33
of these Ex.

ing, with a kind of insult, " that they ought
 " either to know how to conquer, or submit
 " to the victor." So proud and severe a treat-
 ment enraged the Carthaginians, and they re-
 solved rather to perish with their arms in their
 hand than submit to any thing so unworthy of
 the greatness of Carthage. In this dreadful ex-
 tremity, a reinforcement of auxiliary troops
 arrived unexpectedly from Greece, amongst
 whom was *Xanthippus*, the Lacedemonian,
 trained up in the Spartan discipline, and well
 versed in the military art, as it was taught in
 that excellent school. This great man had not
 been long at Carthage, before he plainly per-
 ceived that the losses sustained by the Carthagi-
 nians was owing to the incapacity of their ge-
 nerals. He supported his opinions by such
 strong and convincing reasons, as shewed clear-
 ly that by observing a different conduct, the
 country might not only be secured, but the
 enemy driven out of it. Such a discourse re-
 vived the courage and hopes of the army; but
 when they saw his manner of drawing up the
 troops, of making them advance, retreat, or
 file off with so much regularity and order; in
 a word all the evolutions and movements neces-
 sary in the art-military, both officers and sol-
 diers were struck with admiration. To the
 mournful consternation which had spread a-
 mongst the troops, joy and gaiety succeeded on
 a sudden. They demanded with ardor to be
 led on directly to battle, *Xanthippus* was too
 wise

Xanthippus
 He was
 duke of La-
 cedemonia.

IMPORTANT TRIFLES. [On the Subject

(4)

From wh.
selected, &c

As in p. 1,
of these Ex.

HISTOR. EXAMP. of the VICIS. of FORTUNE.

wife to suffer this ardor to cool; which the fight of the enemy served only to augment; he therefore prepared for an engagement the next morning, the event of which was to decide the fate of Carthage. The two armies met in a large plain: that of the Carthaginians consisted of twelve thousand foot, four thousand horse, and about one hundred elephants; and that of the Romans was fifteen thousand foot, and three thousand horse. It requires no great knowledge in military affairs to perceive that the Roman general ought to have avoided the plains, and chosen posts where the enemy's horse and elephants could not act, which would have deprived the Carthaginians of that part of their army on which they most relied; but, dazzled with the lustre of his late victory, and a long train of fortunate events, he believed himself invincible wherever he gave battle. A few hours convinced him of his mistake, and taught him, by woful experience, the mutability of all human things; that the *race* is not always to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, but that time and chance happeneth to all. The Romans were totally defeated, most of them were crushed to pieces by the enormous weight of the elephants; the rest, without quitting their ranks, were exposed on all sides to the darts, of the light armed troops, and borne down by the horse: only a small number fled, but as it was a flat country, they were easily pursued, and cut to pieces by the auxiliary troops.

Race, &c.
Ecclesiastes
ch. 9. v. 11.

(21)

OF FORTUNE.] IMPORTANT TRIFLES.

HISTOR. EXAMP. of the VICIS. of FORTUNE.

troops. The Carthaginians, after having taken the spoils of the dead, re-entered their capital in triumph, with the general of the Romans, and five hundred prisoners walking before them. The sudden change in their condition filled the citizens with astonishment; they could scarcely believe their own eyes that they who but the day before were upon the brink of destruction, should be restored to peace and happiness: that the army which had filled them with terror and consternation, should be dead at their gates, and the haughty victor, who had so lately treated them with insult and contempt, should now appear himself in chains, and be led captive through their streets, was so surprising a reverse of fortune, as seemed at first incredible; but when their first transports of joy were subsided, men, women, old and young, crowded to the temples to return the gods their fervent thanks for so great a deliverance. As to the general, they threw him into a dungeon, where he endured incredible hardships for more than five years. This battle, says *Polybius*; though not so considerable as many others, may give us some salutary instructions,] which, adds he, is the solid fruit of history.

In the first place can any one rely upon good fortune after what has happened to Regulus? Haughty from his victory, and inexorable to the conquered, he scarcely vouchsafes to hear them, and soon after falls into their hands. Hannibal makes much the same observation to Scipio. "Regulus," said he, "would have been one of

(5)
From wh.
selected, &c

As in p. 3,
of the 1st Ex.

Polybius;
He was an
historical
writer of
great anti-
quity.

IMPORTANT TRIFLES. [On the Subject

(6)

From wh.
selected, &c

Beauties of
History.

• • •

Euripedes:

He was a
famous tra-
gic poet.
He lived
about 460
yrs. before
Christ.

Recorded
by *Dion.*

Mithridates:

He lived
about 150
yrs. before
Christ.

HISTOR. EXAMP. of the VICIS. of FORTUNE.

of the most extraordinary models of valour and success that ever was, if after the victory he had gained in the very country where we now are, he had thought fit to grant our ancestors the peace they demanded: but from not knowing how to check his ambition, and keep within the bounds of reason, the greatness of his elevation only served to make his fall the more shameful." In the second place, we see the truth of what *Euripedes* says, "That one wise head is better than a multitude of hands. One man on this occasion changes the whole face of affairs. On the one side he puts troops to flight that appeared invincible: on the other, he revives the courage of a city and army which he found in consternation and despair.

OF MONIMIA AND MITHRIDATES.

Monimia was a lady admired by all Greece, not so much for her beauty, though confessedly exquisite, as for her wisdom and prudence.

Mithridates king of Pontus, who, excepting Alexander, was the greatest of kings having fallen desperately in love with her, had forgotten nothing that might incline her to favour his passion: he sent her at once fifteen thousand pieces of gold; but her virtue was proof against every attack. She refused his presents till he gave her the quality of wife and queen, and sent her the royal tiara or diadem; an essential ceremony in the marriage of the kings of those nations. Nor did she then comply without extreme regret.

OF FORTUNE.] IMPORTANT TRIFLES.

HISTOR. EXAMP. of the VICIS. of FORTUNE.

gret. A more humble station was what she would much rather have chosen; but her friends, dazzled with the splendor of a crown, and the power of Mithridates, who was at the height of his glory, insisted on her acceptance of so advantageous an offer. She complied, and the world thought her happy; but they were greatly mistaken. That unfortunate princess passed her life in continual sadness and affliction, lamenting her fatal beauty, that instead of an husband had given her a master, and instead of procuring her an honourable abode, and the endearments of conjugal society, had confined her in a close prison, under a guard of barbarians; where, far removed from the delightful regions of Greece, she had only enjoyed a dream of that happiness with which she had been flattered, and had really lost that solid and substantial good she possessed in her own beloved country. But her misery was not yet complete. Mithridates, who for thirty years had maintained a war against the Romans, was at last defeated by *Lucullus* in the plains of Cabiræ. Even at this battle fortune seemed to smile on him as formerly, for he had greatly the advantage in the two first actions; but, on a sudden, fortune, honour, wealth, and every thing the world calls great forsook him: in short, he was so completely conquered in a third engagement, that he was obliged to make his escape on foot, and without a single servant to attend him. Enraged at this defeat, and supposing that his wife would fall into the hands

(7)
From wh.
selected, &c

As in p. 6.
of the 1st Ex.
* * *

Lucullus.
He was a
general of
the Romans
about 100
yrs. before
Christ.

of

IMPORTANT TRIFLES. [On the Subject

(3)

From wh.
selected, &c

HISTOR. EXAMP. of the VICIS. of FORTUNE.

As in p. 6,
of the Ex.

Pompey:
He was one
of the Ro-
man em-
perors.

of Lucullus, jealousy or cruelty prompted him to send her orders to die by the hands of Bacchides the eunuch. When this messenger of death arrived, and had signified to the princess the order of Mithridates, which favoured her no farther than to leave her at liberty to choose the kind of death she thought the most gentle and immediate, Monimia, taking the diadem from her head, tied it round her neck, and hung herself up by it; but that wreath not being strong enough, and breaking, she cried out, "Ah, fatal trifle, you might at least do me this mournful office." Then throwing it away with indignation she presented her neck to Bacchides, who dispatched her with one relentless stroke. As for Mithridates, though he recovered his kingdom again, he did not long enjoy it; for being driven by *Pompey* to his son Pharnaces, he there meditated a scheme of revenge which threw his army into such a terror, that, to prevent the execution of it, they conspired against him, and chose Pharnaces his son king. Mithridates then seeing himself abandoned by all the world, that even his son would not suffer him to escape where he could, retired to his apartment, and after giving poison to such of his wives and daughters as were with him at the time, he took the same himself; but when he perceived that it had not its effect upon him, he had recourse to his sword.

OF FORTUNE.] IMPORTANT TRIFLES.

HISTOR. EXAMP. of the VICIS. of FORTUNE.

OF LYSIMACHUS.

Lysimachus, at the division of Alexander's empire, had several provinces allotted to his share; besides which he afterwards obtained the kingdom of Macedonia, having also fifteen children living to be the comforts of his old age. In such a situation he thought himself contented and happy: but so it was, that, like the fair city *Lysimachia*, which he had built, and called after his own name, and which was swallowed up by an earthquake, he suddenly saw himself and his fortunes, his foreign and domestic hopes, not only turned upside-down, but destroyed for ever. His eldest son Agathocles, a prince of great hopes, because of great prudence, he had married to Lysandra, the daughter of Ptolemy by Euridice, the daughter of Antipater; and sometime after he himself married Arsinoe, the daughter of Ptolemy by Berenice, a widow, who had accompanied his other wife into Egypt as her friend. These, Euridice, Berenice Lysandra, and Arsinoe, introduced scenes of blood, and confusion into both courts. In that of Ptolemy, Berenice prevailed upon the king to favour her children in preference to those of her mistress; whereupon Ptolemy Ceraunus, the king's eldest son, fled to the court of Lysimachus, where he was kindly received by his brother-in-law, Agathocles, and his sister Lysandra. But in this court he found Arsinoe, the daughter of

9.)
From wh.
selected, &c.

Beauties of
History.

Recorded
by Appian.
Justin, &c.

Lysimachia :
A city of
Thrace
founded by
Lysima-
chus about
400 years
bef. Christ.

IMPORTANT TRIELES. [On the Subject

(20)
From wh.
selected, &c.

As in p. 9.
of these Ex.

HISTOR. EXAMP. of the VICIS. of FORTUNE.

Seleucus:
He suc-
ceeded A-
lexander to
the king-
dom of Ba-
bylon, wh.
he became
master of
312 years
bef. Christ.

his malicious mother-in-law, as powerful, and more implacable than she. She infused it into her husbandshead, that his eldest son, Agathocles, who had conquered for him half his empire, and in whom the army and people had their hopes bound up, was secretly his enemy; upon which the homeless young prince was first imprisoned, and then poisoned; a fact which struck not only the family, but all the subjects of Lyfimachus with horror; and the fright of which induced Lysandra to fly with her children, and her brother Ptolemy Ceraunus to Seleucus, where they found not only a civil, but a kind reception. Many of the officers of Lyfimachus's army, and some of the principal lords of his court, followed them, and all concurred in beseeching him to make war upon this unnatural parent, who, vexed with the reflections made on what he had already done, grew every day more and more cruel. Seleucus, though he was seventy-seven years old, had still all the vigour and activity of a young man: he therefore lent a willing ear to these insinuations, the rather because he had no rival left but Lyfimachus; and him once subdued he saw no cause to doubt but that his own empire would be extended as far as that of Alexander his master: instantly therefore he fell upon the dominions of Lyfimachus, in Asia, and stripped him of them almost as soon as he attacked them. Both armies meeting at last near Corupedion, in Phrygia, a battle ensued, where, in the

OF FORTUNE.] IMPORTANT TRIFLES.

HISTOR. EXAMP. of the VICIS. of FORTUNE.

the seventy-fourth year of his age, I. ysmachus, having first lost all his children, except two, fell in the field, and left the victory with his kingdoms to Seleucus, justly fir-named Nicator, or the conqueror.

OF PERSEUS.

Perseus had reigned eleven years king of Macedon. He was powerful and immensely rich: but, after having declared war against the Romans, in a few years he was stripped of his dominions, himself taken prisoner, and together with his wife and children, led in triumph, through the streets of Rome. After being made a public spectacle, he was bound in chains, and thrown into prison. It would melt the most obdurate heart to read the sufferings he there endured. Though deeply sensible of his misery, all that P. Æmilius, who had conquered him could do for his relief, was to get him removed from the common jail into a more commodious prison. Hunger had made him receive with gratitude some broken victuals from a common malefactor, in hopes of living to see better days; but when he found the only favour he was to expect was a change of one prison for another, patience forsook him, and, by abstaining from all kinds of food, he put an end both to his life and sufferings.

His youngest son, Alexander, was reduced to work with his own hands for the means of life: and afterwards, as he had learnt the Latin tongue

(11)

From what
selected, &c.Beauties of
History.Recorded
by Plutarch.

IMPORTANT TRIFLES. [ON FORTUNE]

From the
Selection, &c.

Beauties of
History.

Recorded
by V. Max-
mus.

Carthage
Was a fa-
mous city,
built by
Queen Di-
do, about
869 years
bef. Christ.

HISTOR. EXAMP. of the VICIS. of FORTUNE.

longue he became a register under the magi-
strates of the city of Alba.

OF CORNELIUS SCIPIO ASINA.

Cornelius Scipio Asina was chosen a Roman
consul, and sent against the Carthaginians.
He repaired the loss sustained by the defeat of
Regulus; and, what was infinitely pleasing,
he had an opportunity of revenging the indig-
ny and insults which he had formerly received
from this perfidious enemy. For seven years be-
fore, under colour of a treaty of peace, himself and
all his attendants were made prisoners; and
being carried to *Carthage*, were thrown into a
dungeon. There they remained for some time,
deprived of all the comforts of life, treated
with the utmost inhumanity, and every mo-
ment in expectation of death. By an unexpec-
ted, and happy reverse of fortune, he obtain-
ed his liberty, was restored to his friends, and
now at the head of a numerous army, carry-
ing terror and destruction among that very peo-
ple who had bound him in chains, and confined
him within the walls of a prison. "Who
would have expected," says Valerius Maxi-
mus, "that this Cornelius should be led from the
consular chair to a dungeon, and from a dun-
geon to the highest honours of the state." Vi-
cissitudes of this kind are not without exam-
ples to instruct the wise man not to be too much
depressed by bad, nor too much elated by good
fortune.